

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A content switch managed by a network provider that routes packets to application providers in a computer based communications system using instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the storage medium comprising:

instructions that send a document to a parser;

instructions that fetch a schema associated with the packets, the schema containing routing rules, the routing rules providing a default action when the document does not match the routing rules;

instructions that validate the sent document according to the fetched schema;

instructions that pass the validated document to a routing instruction processor;

instructions that interpret the routing rules in the schema; and

instructions that use the interpreted routing rules to redirect the packets to a specified server, wherein:

wherein each application provider defines switching policies, and

wherein administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

2. (Currently Amended) The content switch as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

instructions that parse Extensible Markup Language (XML).

3. (Currently Amended) A method of carrying out content switching in application providers in a network provider of a computer-based communications system that uses instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;

instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema to determine a routing action to be taken on packets associated with a document written according to the schema, wherein the determination is made by applying routing rules from the schema to elements parsed from the document; and

instructions that route the packets according to the determined routing action, wherein:

wherein each application provider defines switching policies, and
wherein administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

4. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim 3, further comprising:
instructions that use Extensible Markup Language (XML).

5. (Currently Amended) A system that routes traffic to application providers in a network provider of a computer based communications network using instructions recorded on a computer-readable storage medium, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;
instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema, interpret routing rules in a document written according to a schema associated with a packet and apply the routing rules to elements in the network; and

instructions that determine a routing action to be performed on packets from a packet flow associated with the document, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and

~~wherein~~ administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

6. (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 5, further comprising: instructions that parse Extensible Markup Language (XML).

7. (Currently Amended) A computer program schema comprising instructions stored on a computer-readable storage medium in a network provider of a computer based communications system, the medium comprising:

instructions that add parsing capabilities to a content switch;

instructions that add routing information to a schema, the routing information providing a default action when a document does not match the routing information;

instructions that direct the content switch to fetch the schema to provide routing actions to be taken on packets associated with a document written in the language of the schema; and

instructions that route the packets to application providers, wherein:

~~wherein~~ each application provider defines switching policies, and
~~wherein~~ administrative domains of the content switch and application servers are separated.

8. (Currently Amended) The schema as defined in claim 7, further comprising:
instructions that allow a trusted customer of the network provider to define switching policies.